Chinese Herbal Medicine
CMHB211

Session Five

Downward draining Chinese Herbal Medicine
Aromatic Chinese Herbal Medicine
Open the orifices, Transform damp

Chinese Medicine Department
Session Aims

- Discuss Chinese herbs through the identifying the name, investigating medicinal properties, medicinal efficacies and main clinical applications, usage/dosage, and contraindications:
  - Purgative herbs
    - aggressively purgative, moistening laxatives, strong laxatives
  - Aromatic herbs (aromatic open orifices/damp-resolving herbs)

- Identify and group the major common differentiating actions of these herbs into further sub-classes; and

- Discuss some of the pharmacological research that relates to each Chinese herb discussed.
Downward draining herbs

Downward draining herbs either stimulate or lubricate the gastrointestinal tract to facilitate expulsion of stool. They are divided into three major classes:

- **Purgatives**
  - Bitter & cold with strong Heat clearing abilities
  - Often used for constipation due to accumulation of Heat

- **Moist Laxatives**
  - Often nuts or seeds which moisten the intestines
  - Sweet & mild in nature, often used in more deficient patients (e.g. elderly)

- **Harsh Expellants**
  - Strong laxatives that can induce diarrhoea
  - Strong effects, so only used in severe cases

(Bensky et al., 2004)
Purgative and Drain Herb Properties

Three taste types are traditionally used here:

1. **Bitter | Cold**
   - Downward movement, subdues rebellion. These herbs can be used in the management of heat in the Yangming (LI/ST) and Small Intestine. For example, Da Huang and Lu Hui

2. **Salty | Cold**
   - Downward movement, replenish fluids, softens hardness (especially dry stool). For example Mang Xiao

3. **Sweet | Moisten**
   - Harmonize the intestines and relieve spasm. For example Huo Ma Ren, Yu Li Ren and Fan Xie Ye.

(Hempen & Fisher, 2009) © Endeavour College of Natural Health
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Purgatives are used in patterns of interior excess – either interior Heat or interior Cold

- Constipation due to interior Heat – when a febrile disease enters the interior, it enters the Stomach and Intestines and depletes fluids, causing constipation.

  Da Huang | Rhei rhizoma
  Mang Xiao | Natrii sulfas

- Constipation due to interior Cold – accumulation of Cold may also lead to constipation by interfering with normal expulsion of stools. In addition to purgatives, one should also use herbs that Warm interior Cold.
Purgatives
1. Da Huang | *Radix et Rhizoma Rhei*

**Key characteristics** – Purges clumped Heat in the Intestines, cools Blood, removes Blood stasis & in charred from, can stop bleeding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temperature</th>
<th>Cold</th>
<th>🟢🟢🟢</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taste</td>
<td>Bitter</td>
<td>🟢🟢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of action</td>
<td>Sinking</td>
<td>🟢🟢🟢</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site of action</td>
<td>Large Intestine, Stomach, Liver, Heart, Spleen</td>
<td>🟢🟢🟢</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Dosage:** 3-15gm

**Cooking time:** <10 minutes

(Bensky et al., 2004; Hempen & Fisher, 2009)
Purgatives
1. Da Huang | *Radix et Rhizoma Rhei*

**Actions:**

- **Drains Heat & purges accumulations ★★★**
  - Intestinal Heat excess/Yang Brightness organ pattern

- **Clears excess Heat ★★**
  - Damp-heat
  - Fire
  - Blood-heat
  - Toxic-heat

- **Dispels Blood stasis ★★**

(A story about Da Huang …)
Purgatives
1. Da Huang | Radix et Rhizoma Rhei

Clinical applications:

- Intestine Heat excess or Yang Brightness organ pattern
  - **Constipation**, high fever, profuse sweating, thirst, abdominal distention & pain

- Excess Heat
  - Damp-heat - Jaundice, painful urinary dribbling, acute & hot dysentery, edema
  - Fire - Intense fever, agitation, red-swollen eyes, particularly with constipation
  - Blood-heat - bleeding haemorrhoids, haematemesis, nosebleed
  - Toxic Heat – intestinal abscesses, topically for cellulitis, carbuncles, burns

- Dispels Blood stasis
  - Amenorrhoea, fixed abdominal masses, fixed pain due to blood stasis

Pharmacology: Laxative (promotes intestinal contraction & peristalsis), haemostatic (increase viscosity), antibiotic (broad spectrum effect), analgesic, anti-inflammatory, reduces blood pressure, promotes the loss of electrolytes

Contraindications: Pregnancy, Qi and Xue Xu, Spleen Xu. Lactating mothers, postpartum & children less than 12 years.
Purgatives
2. Mang Xiao | *Natrii sulfas*

**Key characteristics** – Softens hardened clumping of pathogenic Heat in the Intestines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temperature</th>
<th>Cold</th>
<th>★★★</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taste</td>
<td>Bitter</td>
<td>★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Salty</td>
<td>★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of action</td>
<td>Sinking</td>
<td>★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site of action</td>
<td>Stomach</td>
<td>★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Large Intestine</td>
<td>★★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Dosage:** 6-12gm

**Cooking:** Don’t decoct, but add to strained decoction or mix with warm water

(Bensky et al., 2004; Hempen & Fisher, 2009)
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Actions:

- Purges accumulation & softens faeces ★★★
  - Heat in the Stomach and Intestines – moistens dryness & softens hardness

- Clears Heat, drains Fire ★★★
  - Particularly Heat/Fire affecting the Stomach

- Soften hard masses & dissipates swelling ★★
  - Inflamed sores

A story about Mang Xiao …
Purgatives
2. Mang Xiao | Natrii sulfas

Clinical applications:
• Heat in the Stomach & Intestines
  ➢ Constipation due to Heat & Dryness – constipation with dry stools

• Fire affecting Stomach or Intestines
  ➢ Constipation, inflamed sores, ulcers, painful swollen red throat, inflammation of the eyes, reddened skin lesions, abdominal fullness & distention with dry stools

• Soften hard masses & dissipates swelling
  ➢ Painful, inflamed ulcerative swelling, red swollen painful eyes, mouth/throat ulcers, breast sores, mastitis

Pharmacology: Osmotic laxative, stimulates intestinal peristalsis, inhibits lactation if used topically on breasts

Contraindications: Spleen and Stomach Xu & cold, elderly, pregnancy

(Constipation (Maclean & Taylor, 2003))
# Purgatives

## Da Huang & Mang Xiao comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herb</th>
<th>Similarity</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Da Huang</strong></td>
<td>Both are strong purgatives that relieve constipation, indicated for dry and hard stools due to accumulated excess Heat. Both are bitter &amp; cold, &amp; clear Heat/Fire from the ST &amp; intestines.</td>
<td>Drains Fire, resolve toxins, stops bleeding from Blood-heat, invigorates Blood &amp; dispels stasis, clears Damp-heat. Stronger purgative action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Rhubarb root)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mang Xiao</strong></td>
<td>Salty, bitter &amp; cold in nature, is good at moistening dryness &amp; softening hard masses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sodium Sulfate)</td>
<td>Both clear heat &amp; relieve swelling (carbuncles &amp; sores with external application)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp

What is the most common pathology that derives from Spleen deficiency?
Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp

- These herbs are acrid, fragrant, warm and dry, and mainly act on the Spleen and Stomach channels to treat Damp stagnating the Middle Burner
  - Acrid property can have the effect of moving Qi
  - Fragrant property can have the effect of unblocking Qi
- These properties promote Qi movement in the Middle Jiao to remove stagnation in the Spleen-Stomach caused by damp-turbidity.

- When Damp stagnates the Middle Burner, it can manifest as:
  - Feeling of distention and fullness of the abdomen, nausea, vomiting, absence of thirst, loss of appetite, morning tiredness/grogginess & stiffness in the joints, diarrhoea, greasy tongue coat with a soggy or slippery pulse

(Bensky et al., 2004; Hempen & Fisher, 2009; Xi & Gong, 2017) © Endeavour College of Natural Health Damp (Pixabay 2019)
Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp
1. (Guang) Huo Xiang | *Pogostemon cablin herba*

Key characteristics – Transforms Damp, harmonises Middle & alleviates nausea, also releases the exterior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temperature</th>
<th>Slightly warm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taste</td>
<td>Acrid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of action</td>
<td>Ascending</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site of action</td>
<td>Spleen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dosage: 3-9gm
Cooking time: Add at end of cooking period, steep for 10 mins
Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp
1. (Guang) Huo Xiang | Pogostemon cablin herba

Actions:
• Aromatically transforms Damp & harmonises the Middle ★★★
  ➢ Damp obstructing the Middle burner

• Releases exterior, dispels Summer-heat★★
  ➢ Summer-heat attacking the Exterior

A story about Huo Xiang …
Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp
1. (Guang) Huo Xiang | *Pogostemon cablin herba*

**Clinical applications:**
- **Damp obstructing the Middle Burner**
  - Vomiting, nausea, morning sickness, fullness of the epigastrium, lack of appetite, diarrhoea, fatigue
- **Summer-heat or Damp-heat invasion**
  - Fever & chills, lethargy, fullness of the chest, sticky tongue coat, heaviness, headache, pain in the epigastrium & abdomen, simultaneous vomiting & diarrhoea

**Pharmacology:** antibiotic and antifungal, upregulates gastric secretions

**Contraindications:** Yin Xu (with Fire)
Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp
1. (Guang) Huo Xiang | *Pogostemon cablin herba*

Some research regarding Huo Xiang:

- **Antibacterial & antifungal activity** (Karimi, 2014)
- **Anti-inflammatory effects** (Xian et al., 2011; Li et al., 2011; Ju et al., 2011)
- **Inhibits the influenza virus** (Li et al., 2012; Kawamura, Kiyohara, Nagai, Hiramoto, & Yamada, 2010).
- **Antiemetic** (Yang et al., 1999)
- **Pogostone**, a chemical extract of Huo Xiang, has been found to exert a gastro-protective effect against gastric ulceration (Chen et al., 2015)
Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp

2. Cang Zhu | *Rhizoma Atractylodis*

**Key characteristics** – Dries Damp, induces sweating, strengthens SP & ST, dispels Wind-damp, helps the vision

| Temperature | Warm | ★★★
| Taste | Acrid, Bitter | ★★★
| Direction of action | Ascending | ★
| Site of action | Spleen, Stomach | ★★★★

**Dosage:** 3-9gm

**Cooking time:** 20 mins
Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp
2. Cang Zhu | *Rhizoma Atractyloidis*

**Actions:**

- **Strongly dries damp & strengthens Spleen ★★★**
  - Damp obstructing the Middle burner & blocking SP’s T&T function
  - Also clears Damp from the Lower Burner

- **Dispels Wind-damp ★★**
  - Wind-damp Bi syndrome
  - External Wind-cold-damp

- **Brightens the eyes ★**

(Bensky et al., 2004; Hempen & Fisher, 2009; Xi & Gong, 2017)
Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp

2. Cang Zhu | *Rhizoma Atractylodis*

**Clinical applications:**

- **Damp obstructing Middle (& Lower) Burner**
  - Poor appetite, diarrhoea, epigastric distention, fatigue, nausea & vomiting, thick greasy tongue coat
  - Damp-heat pouring downward – vaginal discharge, oedema & swollen sore joints

- **Dispels Wind-damp**
  - Bi syndrome/painful obstruction of the joints and limbs, oedema
  - External Wind-cold-damp - Chills, fever, headache, body aches, nasal congestion & little or no sweating

- **Visual disturbances due to Wind-damp**
  - For night blindness or diminished vision with a rough sensation in the eyes

**Pharmacology:** Hepatoprotective, stimulates immune system, antidiabetic, antibiotic & sedative

**Contraindications:** Yin deficiency with interior Heat, profuse sweating due to Qi/Wei deficiency
Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp
3. Huo Po | *Cortex Magnoliae Officinalis*

**Key characteristics** – Regulates Qi & directs it downward, disperses fullness, dries Damp & reduces Phlegm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temperature</th>
<th>Warm ★★★</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Taste</td>
<td>Acrid ★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bitter ★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direction of action</td>
<td>Sinking ★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Site of action</td>
<td>Spleen ★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stomach ★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lung ★★★</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Large Intestine ★</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Dosage:** 3-9gm

**Cooking time:** 20 mins

(Bensky et al., 2004; Hempen & Fisher, 2009)

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Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp

3. Huo Po | Cortex Magnoliae Officinalis

**Actions:**

- **Transforms Damp★★**
  - Damp obstructing the Middle Burner affecting Qi dynamic

- **Moves & regulates Qi, resolves stagnation★★**
  - Qi stagnation affecting the SP & ST

- **Directs Qi downward, reduces Phlegm★★**
  - Phlegm obstructing the Lungs

**(Bensky et al., 2004; Hempen & Fisher, 2009; Xi & Gong, 2017)**
Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp

3. Huo Po | *Cortex Magnoliae Officinalis*

**Clinical applications:**
- Damp obstructing the Middle Burner
  - Abdominal/epigastric distention & fullness, nausea, vomiting, belching, diarrhoea, loss of appetite
- Qi stagnation affecting the SP & ST
  - Food stagnation, chest/abdominal distention & fullness, constipation
- Phlegm obstructing Lungs & ascendant Lung-Qi
  - Cough & wheeze, phlegm & constriction in the chest, respiratory complaints, plum-stone throat

**Pharmacology:** In-vitro antibacterial, anti-ulcerative, slight anticoagulant effect, low doses stimulates respiratory tract whereas high doses inhibit, decreases gastric acid secretion & reduces contractions in the duodenum, CNS suppressant.

**Precautions:** Qi/Yin deficiency or pregnancy

(Bensky et al., 2004; Hempen & Fisher, 2009; Xi & Gong, 2017, Huang 2011; Chen & Chen, 2001)

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# Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp
## Huo Po & Cang Zhu Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herb</th>
<th>Similarities</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Huo Po</strong> (Magnolia Bark)</td>
<td>Both aromatic, remove Damp &amp; enter SP &amp; ST. Both acrid-bitter &amp; warm, can dry Damp and activate SP, (often combined to treat Damp obstructing Middle – distention and fullness of the epigastrium/abdomen)</td>
<td>Enters LU &amp; LI. Effect of drying Damp is less than Cang Zhu. Moves Qi &amp; alleviates chest/abdo distention. Excel at descending Qi, useful for directing ST &amp; LU Qi down and can be used for phlegm obstructing the chest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cang Zhu</strong> (Atractylodes Rhizome)</td>
<td>Especially drying and strengthens the SP. Can dispel Wind-damp (promotes sweat) &amp; treat Bi syndrome due to Wind-cold-damp. Also benefits the eyes.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Bensky et al., 2004; Xi & Gong, 2017)
Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp
4. Sha Ren | *Amomum xanthioidis fructus*

**Key characteristics** – Promotes the flow of Qi, warms the Middle, transforms Damp, improves appetite, calms foetus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temperature</th>
<th>Warm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Taste           | Aromatic  
|                 | Acrid   |
| Direction of action | Sinking |
| Site of action  | Spleen  
|                 | Stomach |

**Dosage:** 3-6gm

**Cooking time:** Add towards end, boil briefly and allow to steep for 3 mins

*(Bensky et al., 2004; Hempen & Fisher, 2009)*

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Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp
4. Sha Ren | *Amomum xanthioidis fructus*

**Actions:**

- **Moves Qi, transforms Damp & strengthens Spleen★★★★**
  - Qi stagnation or Damp obstructing the Middle
- **Warms the middle, stops diarrhoea★★**
  - Diarrhoea from SP Cold
- **Calms foetus ★★**

*A story about Sha Ren …*
Aromatic Herbs that Transform Damp
4. Sha Ren | *Amomum xanthioidis fructus*

**Clinical applications:**
- **Qi stagnation affecting the SP & ST**
  - Epigastric/abdominal distention/pain, diarrhoea, nausea, lack of appetite
  - Damp - epigastric/abdominal discomfort, lack of appetite, vomiting, diarrhoea, fatigue

- **Diarrhoea from Cold affecting the Spleen**
  - Diarrhoea, vomiting

- **Calms foetus**
  - Morning sickness, restless foetus, premature contractions

**Pharmacology:** Inhibits platelet aggregation (caution for anticoagulants), low dose has a stimulatory effect on intestines of rats & rabbits whereas a high dose has an inhibitory effect

**Contraindications:** Yin Xu (with Fire); Blood Dryness

(Bensky et al., 2004; Hempen & Fisher, 2009; Xi & Gong, 2017)
## Aromatic - Chinese Herbal Medicine Summary

### Action: Strongly aromatic herbs which dry damp

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herb</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cang Zhu / Atractylodis rhizoma</td>
<td>Strongly dries Damp, strengthens Spleen, disperse Wind Damp &amp; benefits eyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hou Po / Magnoliae cortex</td>
<td>Regulates Qi, break up stagnation, relieves distension, relieves cough/dyspnoea by descending Lung Qi.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Action: Drains damp, Relieves summer heat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herb</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Huo Xiang / Agastachis herba</td>
<td>Drains Damp from the Middle Burner, stops vomiting, release Exterior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Action: Promotes qi flow, Drains damp

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Herb</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sha Ren / Amomi xanthioidis fructus</td>
<td>Warms the Middle Jiao to treat diarrhoea due to Cold, calms the foetus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Patient 5.1 (female 7 years) presents with constipation (once every three days) very dry stools. She has been suffering with the condition for >4 weeks and also comments that she has a dry mouth and a burning sensation when she attempts to pass a bowel movement.

Clinical Assessments:
Other: Dry mouth
Pulse: Full and rapid
Tongue: Thick/yellow/dry tongue coating

What is the diagnosis, treatment principles and herbal agents that should be used here?
Tutorial Activity – Case Study 5.2

Patient 5.2 (female 26 years) presents with bloating and fullness of the abdomen. The condition commenced <2 weeks prior to presenting to your clinic. The condition is also associated with diminished appetite, a feeling of heaviness and a loose stool with an offensive odour.

Clinical Assessments:
Other: Dry mouth
Pulse: Slippery and slightly rapid
Tongue: Sticky yellow coat

What is the diagnosis, treatment principles and herbal agents that should be used here?
Further resources/readings if interested

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
<th>Da Huang</th>
<th>Mang Xiao</th>
<th>Huo Xiang</th>
<th>Cang Zhu</th>
<th>Huo Po</th>
<th>Sha Ren</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bensky, Clavey, &amp; Stoger, 2004</td>
<td>235-238</td>
<td>240-241</td>
<td>473-476</td>
<td>467-470</td>
<td>470-473</td>
<td>479-481</td>
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<td>Huang, 2011</td>
<td>197-202</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>359-363</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Xi, &amp; Gong, 2017</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>130</td>
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